

California Electric and Magnetic Fields Program

NEWSLETTER

PROGRAM ACTIVITIES UPDATE

August 2000

WIRING VIDEO ANNOUNCEMENT IN STATE PTA PUBLICATION

The Education Unit prepared an announcement of the availability of the wiring video and submitted it for publication in the October issue of the California PTA "Communicator." This announcement, which contains information on how to order the video after September 1, 2000, will also be sent to the Program's stakeholders in the near future. The price of the video is the cost of copying and postage.

FUTURE STAKEHOLDERS ADVISORY CONSULTANTS MEETINGS

We have received a question from a stakeholder about the date of the next Stakeholders Advisory Consultants (SAC) meeting. SAC meetings are now being held less frequently because many of the California EMF Program's research projects are in their final stages and the research staff is concentrating on preparing the early drafts of the Risk Evaluation. In order to use staff and stakeholders' time efficiently, we plan to hold future meetings only when the status of program projects justifies it, but the progress of some projects can be hard to predict. We recognize, however, that it is important to keep the public informed about our future meeting schedule. The current plan is for the next SAC meeting to focus on providing stakeholders with an update on the various research projects that are currently approaching their conclusions. In particular, we expect to hold a meeting shortly before the Kaiser Prospective Miscarriage Study results are published in a peer reviewed journal, to introduce the study's results to our stakeholders and interested members of the public. We expect this meeting to take place later this year, but the exact date depends on the timing of the miscarriage study's

PROJECT MILESTONES JULY 16, 2000, THROUGH AUGUST 15, 2000

Due to the research staff members' focus on the Risk Evaluation, the Program has no other major milestones to report this month. As discussed in the Research Unit Updates below, the various projects underway with outside contractors continue to progress.

publication. Other projects discussed at the next meeting may include the Department of Health Services (DHS) Miscarriage Study led by Gerri Lee, the Occupational Exposure Survey Project, and the School and Power Grid Policy Projects, depending on each project's status at the time of the meeting.

NEWSLETTER

As the program winds down and we focus more and more on the Risk Evaluation, we find we have little to report on a monthly basis, and yet each issue of the newsletter takes many staff hours to complete. Accordingly, we have asked the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) for permission to issue our newsletter every other month, with the possibility of special issues in months when this is warranted. If the CPUC approves this request, the next California EMF Program newsletter will be sent in October; otherwise, the next newsletter will be produced in September as originally scheduled.

OLD PROGRAM E-MAIL ADDRESSES

Since most of the EMF staff computers were networked last year, the program's Health Educator and Administrator have been phasing out their old e-mail accounts with the internet service provider DNAI. These accounts, emfadmin@dnai.com and emf-educ@dnai.com, will be shut down as of September 1, 2000. The Health Educator, Jessica Hecht, can still be reached at her DHS e-mail address, jhecht@dhs.ca.gov, and the Program Administrator, Jack Collins, can be reached at jcollins@dhs.ca.gov.

BUDGET AND TIMELINE INSERT

An insert with information on the Program's current schedule and budget is being sent to core SAC members along with this newsletter.

FAREWELL TO WEBB SPRAGUE

Webb Sprague, the Program's research assistant, will be leaving the California EMF Program on August 25, 2000, to start a new job as a programmer for O1, a "Point of Presence" telecommunications provider in Sacramento. Webb's many contributions during his time with the program include setting up the Program's library of EMF-related articles, organizing comments received on several research project drafts, maintaining the Program's Web site, and assisting with the Risk Evaluation. We wish Webb luck as he begins his new career in computer programming. Due to the late stage in the Program's progress, we will not be hiring a replacement research assistant.

RESEARCH UNIT UPDATES

School Policy Analysis: Keith Florig has revised the School Policy Project software model to include epidemiological input from EMF staff, and is currently working on his responses to the SAC and public comments. When this work is complete, the revised draft will be sent to the project's peer reviewers.

Power Grid/Land Use Policy Analysis: Detlof von Winterfeldt is currently out of the country due to the illness of his mother in Germany. He continues to work on the revised project draft, but this has delayed his revision by a few weeks. When this work is complete, the revised draft will be sent to the project's peer reviewers.

Epidemiology Workshop: Almost all papers have been revised in response to the peer reviewers' comments.

Prospective Miscarriage Study: De-Kun Li is drafting a manuscript for publication.

Occupational Exposure Study: We are waiting for the peer reviewers to submit their comments on this project's report.

Risk Evaluation: As a result of comments from other DHS staff at our June internal workshop, we obtained formal consultation from Sander Greenland of UCLA and informal advice from Kenneth Rothman of Boston University and Richard Royall of Johns Hopkins University on some statistical and methodological issues. This has led to refinement and improvement of the Risk Evaluation draft. When the second draft is completed, we will send it to the members of the Science Advisory Panel for their individual comments.

EDUCATION AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE UNIT UPDATE

Fact Sheets

School Interpretation of Measurements: Most of the Health Education Assistant's time this month has gone into updating a fact sheet intended to help individuals interpret EMF measurements taken on school campuses. Aimed at school officials and concerned parents, this fact sheet describes some results of the Exposure Assessment Survey, and further explains how to interpret these results.

Frequently Asked Questions about EMF in Residences: The Health Educator, Jessica Hecht, is now revising the initial draft of a new fact sheet on EMF in residential settings. This fact sheet is intended to answer many of the questions the Education Unit gets from members of the public about EMF from various sources in homes and apartments.

Long Fact Sheet: The Program is preparing to post a revised version of our long fact sheet on our Web site. This fact sheet describes electric and magnetic fields and the EMF/health debate using a moderate level of technical detail.

Supplemental Information Page: Education Unit staff are also producing a short supplemental information page to accompany many of our fact sheets. This page will contain information about the California EMF Program and a glossary of terms commonly used in our EMF fact sheets. This reference page will provide extra information for those struggling to understand basic EMF terms or for those who want additional information on the California EMF Program.

Wiring Video Introductory Sheet: The Health Education Assistant, Kimberly Merin, is now revising the introductory sheet describing the video on correcting improper wiring in schools. When it is completed, this introductory sheet will be the non-technical summary of the wiring video project.

Other Education and Technical Assistance Unit Activities

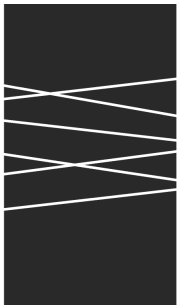
Response to Public Questions: As usual, the California EMF Program continues to respond to questions about EMF from members of the public.

Training: Led by Gerri Lee, the Health Education team left the office to learn more about power lines. In a half-day outing, the Health Education Unit learned about different types of power lines, which will enable staff to respond better to questions from the public.

EMF PROGRAM STAFF CONTACT INFORMATION

Raymond Neutra	622-4905	rneutra@dhs.ca.gov	Jessica Hecht	622-4430	jhecht@dhs.ca.gov
Alvin Leonard	622-4432	alvinleonard@yahoo.com	Kim Merin	622-4435	kmerin@dhs.ca.gov
Vincent Del Pizzo	622-4418	delpizzo@yahoo.com	Jack Collins	622-4431	jcollins@dhs.ca.gov
Geraldine Lee	622-5091	gerrilee17@yahoo.com	Myra Alcaide	622-4434	MAlcaid1@dhs.ca.gov

main phone (510) 622-4500, fax (510) 622-4505



California Electric and Magnetic Fields Program

A project of the California Department of Health Services and the Public Health Institute
Elihu Harris State Office Building
1515 Clay St., 17th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612